

# STRATEGIES TO HELP COMMUNICATE

## Strategies to help you communicate

There are things you can do, and things others can do, to help you communicate more easily – with or without hearing aids.

Strategies that can help you communicate more effectively

- **Tell others that you have a hearing loss and let them know how they can help (e.g. make sure you have my attention before speaking to me, speak slower, look directly at me).**
- **Keep background noise to a minimum – turn down the radio and television when you're talking, and avoid fans or running water during conversations.**
- **Move closer to the person speaking and position yourself so you can always see them.**
- **In large groups, position yourself in the center. At large gatherings, such as church services or lectures, sit at the front of the room. Use an assistive listening device, if available.**

### How family and friends can help

- **Reduce background noise by turning down the television or radio, turning off the dishwasher, fan and other noisy devices.**
- **Move closer to the listener.**
- **Try to have only one person speaking at a time in large groups, when possible.**
- **Do not cover your mouth or chew gum or food when speaking.**
- **Reduce the distance between you and the listener. Look directly at the person when speaking.**
- **Ensure conversation areas are well lit so the listener can watch facial expressions.**
- **Avoid conversations in the car where it is difficult to hear between the front and back seats or to read lips.**

- **Get the listener's attention before you begin speaking.**

Speak naturally

- **Pronounce your words clearly and allow the listener time to fully comprehend the conversation.**
- **Rephrase a sentence rather than simply repeating it, as some phrases are easier to lip read than others.**
- **Do not talk from another room. Not being able to see each other when talking is a common reason people have difficulty understanding what is said.**
- **Speak clearly, slowly, distinctly, but naturally, without shouting or exaggerating mouth movements. Shouting distorts the sound of speech and may make speech reading more difficult.**
- **Say the person's name before beginning a conversation. This gives the listener a chance to focus attention and reduces the chance of missing words at the beginning of the conversation.**
- **Do not speak too quickly. Slow down a little, pause between sentences or phrases, and wait to make sure you have been understood before going on.**
- **Keep your hands away from your face while talking. If you are eating, chewing, smoking, etc. while talking, your speech will be more difficult to understand. Beards and moustaches can also interfere with the ability of the hearing impaired to speech read.**
- **If the hearing impaired listener hears better in one ear than the other, try to make a point of remembering which ear is better so that you will know where to position yourself.**

Have a great Day From Tammy Spry Clear Ear Hearing Aid Center (219) 934-9747 work (219) 922-9745 fax

# SILENCE IS GOLDEN



When at first our hearing begins to fade;  
Though the signs are foretelling, we may choose to evade.  
We tell others they don't speak clearly, they mumble a lot;  
My concentration is elsewhere, that's why I ask what.  
Please talk a bit louder; your voice is so weak;  
I could hear you OK, if you would look at me as you speak.  
I can hear you just fine, when you're close at hand.  
If you would learn to enunciate, I could understand.  
Being with family is one of life's greatest joys;  
But, don't expect me to hear with all of that noise.  
It's easy to blame others, though it's not really fair;  
It's your hearing problem, solve it, show others you care.  
He who said 'Silence is Golden' spoke for himself only;  
For the hearing impaired, "Silence is Lonely".

*By: Roy Bion*

# Caring for someone with hearing loss

Hearing loss does not only affect the individual. Spouses, family members, friends and colleagues all benefit when people hear better. Encouraging someone to seek help may be hard, but it helps caregivers and those with hearing loss equally. Let Clear Ear improve communication for your family.

If your parents have untreated hearing loss, you may notice changes in their social behavior. They may have withdrawn from social activities, or seem embarrassed. Perhaps they feel guilt or anger over their inability to follow conversations. Hearing loss can lead to depression, confusion and isolation. All these types of behavior can also have a negative effect on anyone who is near and dear.

Sometimes an individual doesn't realize how much he or she is missing or is in denial. Especially for people with these challenges, it may take extra patience and persistence to get a loved one to accept that they need help. But if you are persistent, your guidance may be the key element in finding a solution.

If you spend a lot of time with someone who has untreated hearing loss, you may have to repeat yourself multiple times, re-explaining or speaking louder than you used to. In a way, you become the person's ears. This may make both parties feel more frustrated. Becoming aware of the numerous efforts you make to "translate" could be an important first step towards their treatment. Realizing the extent of the support you need to give may empower you to take action, on behalf of you both.

Improve their quality of life today! When treated with properly assessed, selected and fitted hearing aids experience:

- Better communication and enhanced quality of life
- Improved relationships with friends and family
- Increased confidence and sense of self-worth
- Greater independence
- Improved social life participation
- Enhanced sense of security and safety
- Improved school and job performance

Family members observe even greater benefits!

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